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Cotonou, March 1, 2026

His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan
President of the United Arab Emirates
Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates

Re: A message of solidarity and peace from Benin

Your Highness,

My name is Judicael Brindel. I am a young independent researcher from Cotonou, Benin, in West Africa. I have no political power, no army, no title. I have only words, and the belief that words still matter.

I write to you today to express my deepest solidarity with the people of the United Arab Emirates and with all those who are suffering from the violence that has fallen upon your country and your region. From where I stand, in West Africa, the news of fires and strikes reaching cities I have never visited but have always admired — it hurts. It reminds every one of us that no nation, however strong and however peaceful, is immune to the madness of war.

You have dedicated your life to peace, to development, to building something lasting for your people and for humanity. The bridges, the ports, the towers, the openness your country has shown to the world — these are not the works of a nation that seeks destruction. They are the works of a people that believes in a future.

What is happening now is the opposite of everything you have built. But I believe that the builders are stronger than the destroyers. History has always proven this. What is constructed with patience and vision outlasts what is erased in anger.

I do not pretend to offer solutions that experienced diplomats and leaders have not yet found. I write simply as a human being, from a continent that has known its own share of pain, to say: you are not alone. There are people across the world — young people, researchers, students, ordinary citizens — who are watching, who are hoping, and who believe that the voices of reason and dignity must prevail over the voices of destruction.

Please do not lose hope. The world needs leaders who have seen what peace can build, to remind others what war destroys.

With deep respect and sincere solidarity,

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